



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
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May 14, 2008

Dr. Roy E. Crabtree
Regional Administrator
Southeast Regional Office
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

Subject: EPA NEPA Comments on NOAA SDEIS for "Amendment 15B for the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region"; South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; South Atlantic Ocean; CEQ #20080153; ERP #NOA-E91021-00

Dear Dr. Crabtree:

Consistent with our responsibilities under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for Snapper Grouper Amendment 15B. EPA provided NEPA comments on the DEIS for Amendment 15B in a letter dated January 7, 2008.

We note from the abstract (pg. 2) that the SDEIS was prepared to update the economic analysis in Section 4.4 regarding the "bag limit sale provision in Amendment 15B". Inasmuch as this update involves economics, EPA has no additional NEPA comments to offer at this time beyond those submitted for the DEIS in our previous letter. Consistent with our DEIS rating, EPA rates this SDEIS as an "LO" (Lack of Objections). EPA continues to overall support Snapper-Grouper Amendment 15B, but offers no comments on the economic analysis updated in the SDEIS.

We appreciate NOAA's continued coordination with us and look forward to receipt of the Final EIS (FEIS). At that time we will review NOAA's responses to our comments on the DEIS. Should you have questions regarding these comments, feel free to contact Chris Hoberg of my staff at 404/ 562-9619 or hoberg.chris@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heinz J. Mueller".

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
NEPA Program Office

cc: Dr. Rodney F. Weiher (NOAA NEPA Coordinator) – Silver Spring, MD